

# The Lion's Game

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Cast: (Elenco)

Bailiff: Ondina Berndt

Queen Eleanor: Ana Cláudia Ambrosi Lopes

Defendant: André Franzoni

Prosecutor: Claudia Ondrussek

King Richard: Rogério Guilherme

Knights: Eneleo Silva, Cezar de Castro, André Franzoni

Nuns: Lee Yi-Ching, Claudia Ondrussek

Archbishop of Tyre: Dennis Werner

Soldiers: Eneleo Silva, Cezar de Castro, André Franzoni

Joana: Ondina Berndt

Archer: Marco Aurélio Castro Rodrigues

Keyboards, clarinet, recorder: Dennis Werner

## ACT I

Queen Eleanor's Court of Love, Poitiers, 1168

Bailiff:

Now stand all prosecutors, just

All you defendants, vile

The Court of Love will now begin

So clear the center aisle.

And to the Queen's wise judgments

Your fates now reconcile.

Chorus:

Hail gracious Queen, Queen Eleanor

Hail judge of wisdom, evermore

Eleanor:

What sordid case have we today

Of a lady badly treated?

What errant knight has now his love

Abused or scorned or cheated?

Or broken solemn promises

Or his love's chastity entreated?

Bailiff:

A case of callous thievery!

An act of cowardice!

The wicked crime is this good judge:

This Knight just stole a kiss!

Chorus:

Such villainous harassment

To chivalry's embarrassment!

Eleanor:

Speak knight and watch your tongue

Say something to your benefice.

Knight:

Her charms and beauty, they're to blame

For all my bold advances

How could a knight ever resist

A jewel that so entrances

Forgive my brash intrusions

On my lady's modest airs

My acts spring from sweet passion

Desires my lady shares.

I vow I'll love eternally

My lady's wit and style

Her graceful form, her lovely face

Her all alluring smile.

His lady:

He loves my wit and graceful form?

What fickle love is this

That fades as fast as aging flesh

And goes no further than a kiss?

How could I trust a vow so thin.  
His "eternal" lasts a day  
He'll need much better arguments  
Before I'll say okay.  
Pure love is a universal  
Not bound to material.  
One can't love flesh eternally  
But only things ethereal.

Knight:  
My lady fair will ne'er be loved  
Of material substance she is made  
And so she is a singular  
And thus her very self will fade.  
But I can love eternally  
The memories of her charms  
And love today her splendid flesh  
Her face, her lips, her arms.

(turning to his lady)  
Why worry about tomorrow's cares  
Tomorrow you'll not be you  
Think of yourself today, my love  
Let's enjoy a rendezvous.

Eleanor:  
Good knight you've argued admirably  
With skillful dialectic  
But still I fear your stolen kiss  
Was just a bit too hectic  
Your reason also fails at times  
Your love is not eternal  
You and your memories, too, will fade  
So heed counsel most maternal

You'll savor each moment's sweet delights  
Since neither will be forever  
But take good care of future selves  
In all that you endeavor.

Chorus  
Just Queen, Noble Judge  
This wise sentence, don't begrudge

(Exeunt all but Eleanor and Prince Richard)

Eleanor:  
Prince Richard, Count of fair Poitou  
Did you note how each passed on the blame  
How both the others' words poo-pooh  
To crush the logic of the others claim  
How words when sung sound much more true  
And words when stuttered sound totally lame  
These lessons one day will be precious to you  
To increase wealth and to further fame  
The troubadour's art, the politician's coup  
The warrior's plots and the king's acclaim  
Learn all of these skills and whatever you do  
Be always ready to play the game

Richard:  
If life is a game, then I'll play it well  
In battle or discourse, you know I do well.  
Athletic or intellectual. All games are an exquisite thrill  
Your training's most effectual.  
I play to win, and win I will  
Administration's for the English boors  
Who shun all risk, and whose lives are so plain  
They live with wives and have no paramours  
With nothing lost and nothing to gain

And everyone loves the winner of a game  
No matter how useless, evil or dull  
A hero in sports can then never feel blame  
As long as he gives a spectacle.

Eleanor:  
With logic or sword, you'll others compel  
To honor our lineage, immortelle.  
My son you'll rival Arthur's fame  
So long as you like a good game  
How proud a mother I will be  
To have a son who's such a prodigy  
They'll cheer your bold and heroic deeds  
And troubadours praise your armor and steeds  
They'll all forget all of their primary needs  
Like food and clothing and their planting seeds.  
Good kings are not meant to be dull bureaucrats,  
Concerned with wealth and proletariats,  
To hedge all their bets with humdrum caveats  
Just games of style for aristocrats.

## ACT II, Gisors, 1188

### **Knights:**

In jousting finery we're all bedecked  
We mount our steeds to draw respect  
From rivals we would soon deject  
And maidens fair whom we protect

The tournaments in spring serve well  
To attract and conquer a demoiselle  
Or to assess the strength of foes  
Without a war and all its woes  
Like bucks who test each other's force  
When horns they lock on the breeding course  
Without great harm the loser departs  
To try next year his fighting arts

Prince Richard shuns all our tournaments  
And all our splendid ornaments  
Instead he rushes off to war  
He plunders rapes and savors gore  
Young maids he never tries to win  
With words and dances masculine  
Instead of pledging love so dear  
He conquers maidens using fear  
Although for us he's never smiled  
I think this bully is far too wild  
For us to scorn or to oppose  
Or give allegiance to his foes

### **Nuns:**

The kings and barons all at war  
Have ruined fields and towns  
The church's monasteries, too,  
Have had their own shakedowns  
We've got to stop this bickering  
That takes away our wealth  
They claim they fight for justice and truth,  
But ruin all our health  
And what is justice but a word  
To justify their greed  
They claim ancestral rights to seize  
What their fathers just decreed.  
King Henry and his offspring too,  
King Philip and his knights  
Have gathered to negotiate  
And put an end to fights  
Their truces never lasted long  
And Henry's sons are wary  
They'll fight for all their inheritance  
And whom they want to marry  
Alliances change every day  
So is it any wonder  
That fields are burned and maidens weep  
And castles rent asunder?

Now Tyre's archbishop has arrived  
He's talking to the prior

He'll give a most combative speech  
Crusaders to incite  
I'm sure he'll give a stirring talk  
To aid Jerusalem's plight  
The kingdom fell to Saladin's sword  
It's time to make things right  
So let the Brits and French now take  
Their wars to another place  
And leave us here at home in peace  
Far away from war's disgrace

**Archbishop of Tyre:**

Hail kings and nobles, knights and squires  
I bring bad news of what this Kurd conspires  
He as conquered Holy Jerusalem  
And would all Christians to the sword condemn

Only Tyre remains in the Holy Land  
To protect worthy Christians  
From these infidel bands  
I beg you to take on a sacred vow  
And defend fair Tyre and Christianity now.  
You knights and yeomen, your blood must boil  
To think of the Turks on our Lord's holy soil  
They abuse its women, its riches despoil  
To you good Christians, belongs this spoil  
And you good royal chancellors  
With your kings and rulers off at wars  
You can each in his own way procure  
High taxes for any expenditure  
And you good farmers with fine strong backs  
I'm sure you would rather pay a tax  
While your kings and lords are off in battle  
Than risk their plunder of fields and cattle  
From priests to cardinals, I'm sure you'll agree  
If kings must bow to the Papal See  
Then the Church will finally be in command  
And Christians safe in the Holy Land  
You stalwart mercenaries  
War will give your necessities  
It will give you food and clothes and tents  
And salaries and lots of armaments.  
And so good kings I am sure you'll see  
How this sacred vow is a strategy  
To please your subjects and increase fame  
And give you indulgence for moral blame.

**Act III Road to Jerusalem, 1191**  
Soldiers (sacking bodies after an ambush):

Jaffa, Acre, Ascalon and Tyre  
We've rescued from the Kurdish foe  
Only Richard our King could us all inspire  
To kill with lance and crossbow  
And now with Jerusalem so close at hand you'd abandon us to our plight?  
What can Philip of France now give to you,  
Now that he's abandoned the fight?  
You will surely regret having missed all the fun  
Of keeping hostages subdued  
Of tortures given and ransoms won  
and breaking what's tabooed.

But here comes Richard on his horse  
With Arab heads in tow  
For murder he has no remorse  
He does it just for show  
I'm sure he'll make it very clear  
Just why this war's so grand  
If you stay long enough to hear  
I'm sure you'll understand  
King Richard could you please explain  
Just why this war goes on?  
Material rewards have we to gain?  
Will evil be thus forgone?

King Richard:  
My friends, this war is but a game  
Of honor and wealth and fame  
But honor's the key to warfare you see  
It's what hearts and minds inflame  
Defend your honor with zest  
Show others that you are the best  
With a masculine grin, show that you always win  
At any foolhardy test  
Now three types of honor there be  
To show your supremacy.  
There's personal talent and courage so gallant  
And then moral integrity.  
My personal talents are known.  
I've never been overthrown  
My body so strong, my ploys never wrong  
I easily rivals dethrone  
With personal courage I am blessed,  
As all of my acts attest.  
Even when sick in bed, when others have fled  
I still pursue my quest  
My personal virtue's unspoiled  
For justice I've always toiled  
To right what is wrong with things that belong  
To nobility so unspoiled.  
With promises I am true  
Their ransom when it came due  
So true to my word, with nerves undeterred  
I those three thousand prisoners slew.  
But leave us, we don't much care  
A coward we'll easily spare  
For those who would flee, in vile infamy  
Life only can end in despair.

(Exeunt soldiers. Enter Joana)

Richard:  
King Philip's troops have gone away  
My own troops are now demoralized  
Prince John can now his oath betray  
And leave my empire jeopardized  
Both he and Philip now try to seize  
The lands I left too unprotected  
Defending the Cross while overseas  
My kingdom I've left too much neglected  
This crusade must end without delay.  
I need a truce with Saladin  
Peace with honor I must portray  
I must exit with my name come clean.  
Dear sister the answer is in your hands  
Saladin's brother will share with you  
Jerusalem and other lands  
If with marriage we can join the two.

Joana:  
"Peace with honor" that's what you'd call it  
You would wed me to an infidel.  
I beg you please, now recall it.  
To this great dishonor I rebel.  
Your goal was always to slaughter the Turks  
To stamp out this blasphemous creed  
And now you propose with cynical smirks  
A tie you would once never concede.

Richard:  
Dear sister one's goals can always change  
Like the wind they move in different routes  
What is right or wrong can range  
To conform to all our heart's pursuits.  
Any goal can seem lofty if you spin a good tale  
Make money, run hurdles or win at chess.  
Seek the source of the Nile or the Holy Grail.  
Find the age of the earth or save a princess.

It makes no difference just what you search  
If you can succeed at what you began.

Joana:  
So like Prince John, brothers, indeed,  
You mock the Holy Church  
And every true value known to man

Richard:  
Joana dear sister, I beg you please,  
Save me from these hostilities.

Joana:  
With values that change like a passing breeze  
No wonder you make only enemies.

#### ACT IV Chalus, 1199

**Eleanor:**  
Dear Richard, my son, I heard you were shot  
And lying on your death bed  
The news has left me so distraught  
I ran here with arms outspread  
You were always my favorite son, you know  
Over Henry or Geoffrey or John,  
Your courage and wit,  
They make my heart glow  
On your valor I'll always fawn  
How could any in England ever begrudge  
The taxes we raised for your ransom  
A warrior whose name none dare smudge  
And a ruler ever so handsome  
And what is more just and fair and wise  
Than restoring that Holy town?  
By our Lord and Savior, history's heir  
Is a Latin Christina crown.

Richard:

But mother I feel while lying here  
Perhaps I did the wrong thing  
Although successful I appear.  
I have not been a good king

Eleanor:  
This is nonsense, you've done what a king should do.  
Defending your lands and your rights  
Your great unbending honor, the Arabs you slew,  
Makes a legend that song invites

Richard:  
But justice means giving to each his due,  
To reap just what you sow.  
With equal rights for all in view  
Disparities to overthrow.  
So come here brave archer, sporty child  
Where's the justice in killing a king?  
Did you think it right to act so wild  
Can you thus more justice bring?

**Archer:**  
I sought to protect what was left of my kin  
In the hopes that they might flee.  
And to be quite honest and genuine,  
I don't know what justice could be.  
And just what do you mean by equality?  
Equal assets is that what you saw?  
Or perhaps equal opportunity?  
Or equal treatment in questions of law?  
Can these different equalities all coalesce  
If people are not the same?  
When some work hard and some work less

Equal treatments won't give the same.  
And so can we then reap just what we sow  
Equal assets would all get upset

And can we deserve our joy or woe?  
Is everything credit or debt?

Do we really want all the same?  
The gentleman and the dame?  
The same in height, with bodies slight  
Or having the very same name?  
Should we reap just what we sow?  
The joys and all the woe?  
Is it really so vital to ask for requital

Should things be quid pro quo?  
Can one really pay for a crime?  
Or calculate payments in time?  
And what can you build for one who was killed  
That will settle accounts to the dime?

Eleanor:  
I agree that differences should be respected  
A king should be judged according to his day and time  
All agree that it could surely never be objected  
That King Richard's rule is a paradigm  
of kingly duties never left neglected  
Of power and force and courage.

Archer:  
At any time there's more than one standard  
Of how to judge what is right or wrong  
The Capetian flowers praise peace as grander  
Plantagenet lions praise what's brutish and strong.  
And the Church's values have often meandered  
And any value can be put to song.  
But promoting well-being, this value's the same  
For different cultures and different times  
Though requiring a different immediate aim  
Or changing what are considered as crimes  
The important thing is to choose a game  
That to greater well-being always climbs.  
It's well-being the thing we should strive for  
It's the reason we all are alive for.  
To find what is best, for us and the rest  
For this kings and laws should contrive for.  
For well-being means thinking ahead  
While justice stirs up what's dead  
Encourage what's good, that's just what laws should.  
And not stir up hatreds instead.  
And as far as incentives might go.  
The reaping of just what you sow,  
It may be a goal, and good for the soul,  
If it helps to make well-being grow.  
And equalities are great  
If resentments they abate  
But if we are compelled, all alike to be held  
Then this surely we would all hate.

Eleanor:  
But stop.  
King Richard now is dying  
This noble soul,  
Who deserved so much better  
Than a peasant's arrow mortifying  
So this archer now, you'll bind and fetter  
Killing a king well justifying  
a villain's death carried out to the letter.

Archer:  
Kill me you may, but not out of merit  
We can deserve neither grace nor doom  
If some are lucky and fortune inherit  
Let not envy us consume.  
Resentment and hatred we must forbear it  
And leave our hearts open for love to resume  
Right now revenge may mark the day  
But I have hope in a future near  
When laws and politics both might value the way

Of seeking well-being as something so dear  
that thoughts of resentment will then all give way  
and visions of goodness and mercy appear.